

DEDICATED TO OUR COMMUNITY, OUR PROFESSION AND EACH OTHER

Summer 2013

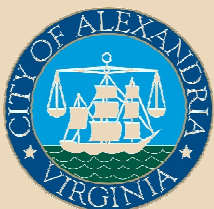


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This newsletter is written and compiled by the Alexandria Fire Department's Community Services Unit

On the web!
www.alexandriava.gov/fire



THE RESPONDER

Rescue Me



Technical Rescue Team members work to rescue a victim from a sky crane during the 2013 Rescue Challenge event.

From May 6 to 9, 2013, Alexandria's Technical Rescue Team joined other teams from around the region and across the state for the 2013 Rescue Challenge. The annual event brings teams together in a collaborative effort to solve some of the toughest rescue challenges faced by today's fire service. This year's activities were held in Fort Belvoir, Lorton, and the counties of Prince William in Virginia and Prince Georges in Maryland. Teams from Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, Fort Belvoir, Montgomery County, Saunton, Central Virginia, Virginia Beach and several others participated together. Each team was paired up with another jurisdiction for the duration of the event. Alexandria paired up with the Fairfax County Technical Rescue Team.

The Rescue Challenge is not a competition. It is an opportunity for highly **SEE RESCUE, PAGE 8, COL. 1.**

Health and Safety, The Land of Hope and Dreams

By Jeff Merryman, Battalion Chief, Health and Safety Unit

In my world of Health and Safety, I live in a land of hope and dreams. My **hope** is that the health and safety unit does everything within its power to keep you safe and accident and injury free. My **dreams** are that each of you shares my hope and that you are willing to do your part to ensure health and safety for yourself and those you work with.

The members of the Health and Safety Unit (HSU) recently completed a quarterly planning session to re-adjust our focus and our priorities so that we can travel through my land with better and more productive information that will hopefully fulfill all of my dreams. I have never been more optimistic of the direction of our departments Health and Safety Unit.

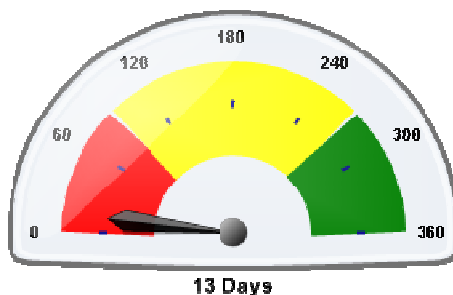
The HSU has recently activated software that will assist us in tracking and trending both accidents and injuries. We can now provide accident and injury data for each shift, battalion, station and unit. The Shift Safety Officers will be bringing the information to all levels, so that we can all learn from recent "challenges" regarding accident and injuries. I believe the HSU must share this history, so that

we don't continue to make the same mistakes.

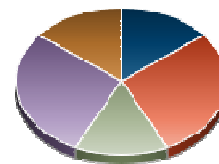
Within our new software, the HSU now has a database of vaccinations and immunizations. The Shift Safety Officers will soon begin a person-to-person visit to share with each of you what we have on file, so that you can help us maintain the most comprehensive data regarding your vaccines. On the horizon the HSU will pursue additional

our driver operators. Friends, you need to free yourself of the fear that these drive cameras are spy cameras. If we are doing everything that is expected of us as drivers then we should all be able to overcome the perceived "drive cam fear."

The HSU will be providing a document that will help guide us in the event of another line of duty death. More commonly



Days without an Employee Incident



- Rubbed or Abraded By
- Strain or Injury By
- Burn or Scald - Heat or Cold Exposures -
- Fall Slip or Trip Injury
- Caught In Under or Between

preventative testing and additional vaccinations.

Employee Injury by Primary Cause of Injury

Our department is moving forward with drive-cameras in our apparatus as part of a protection system for



known as a Casualty Assistance Plan this document should provide direction needed in the event we should ever cross that bridge again.

Along with this document the **SEE HEALTH, PAGE 9, COL. 1**

Fire News

40th Firefighter Recruit School Graduates.



The Alexandria Fire Department 40th Fire Recruit Class

On March 28 the Department held a graduation ceremony for the 40th Fire Recruit School. Twenty eight recruits graduated after successfully completing the twenty two week school at the Department's Professional Development Center.

Twelve of the twenty two positions are an increase in staffing in preparation for the opening of Fire Station 210 in 2014. Prior to the opening of the new fire station, these recruits have been assigned to the eight fire stations to complete the next phase of their training curriculum.

Congratulations Recruit School 40.

Department Chooses Name for New Fireboat.

Alexandria's new fireboat, which will arrive this summer, now has a chosen name. Members of the Department voted for a selection of names

during the spring. The most popular name was *Relief*. The

name can be tied to Station 201, which houses the Marine Operations Team. Constructed in 1852, the Relief Fire Company was housed in what is now Station 201.

The station



Alexandria's new fireboat, the *Relief*.

disbanded briefly during the Civil War in order to house Union Soldiers, but it was reestablished in 1867.

The Relief will be docked at the City Docks in Old Town along the Potomac River.

A commissioning ceremony will occur soon after the Relief arrives in Alexandria.

New Radio Communications Model Moves Forward

Fire Departments in Northern Virginia are changing to a new communications model which is more direct and less conversational. On May 1st the Department of Communications and the Fire Department began using the 4 C's Communication Model. The 4 C's are as follows:

1. Connect
2. Convey

3. Clarify

4. Confirm.

In brief, the sender must *connect* with the receiver. Then they must *convey* the message. The receiver *clarifies* or "reads back" the message from the sender. Finally the

sender *confirms* the message.

Here is an example of the 4C model:

Dispatcher: "Tower 203 from Alexandria"

T203: "Tower 203"

Dispatcher: "Upgrading the call to a house fire. Switch over to 2 Delta"

SEE FIRE, PAGE 7, COL. 1

EMS News

Bariatric Patient Drill



Above and below: medics practice using special equipment to transport bariatric patients during an in-service drill.



In April the Department's Medics participated in a bariatric patient movement drill as part of a day long continuing education class. The two hour long segment was held at the Lee Center. Staff from Physician's Transport Service (PTS) provided training on the use of their bariatric equipment and vehicles. Medics became familiar with the equipment carried on these specially

designed vehicles as well as how to set up and use the equipment.

PTS has established an agreement with the Department to provide their bariatric vehicles and equipment if needed by the Department for these special types of patients.

The information and practical exercises were extremely beneficial to our emergency medical providers.

Alexandria Celebrates EMS Week

Once again the Department's EMS providers took time out from their busy schedules to reach out and educate the community during EMS Week. EMS Week ran from May 19 to 25.

Medics provided outreach activities at John Carlyle Square Park, Market Square at City



Medics reach out to lunch time passersby to provide CPR instruction and information on recognition of life threatening emergencies.

Hall, T.C. Williams High School and at several farmer's markets on both ends of the City.

Focus was given to teaching the public about the importance of recognizing the signs and symptoms of major medical emergencies. The medics also offered short courses in CPR to interested individuals.

On May 23, INOVA Alexandria Hospital held the annual EMS Week Breakfast. Vice Mayor Alicia Silverberg read the EMS Proclamation from City Council. Call of the Quarter awards were handed out to a number of medics for their exceptional performance on critical care emergencies during the past 3 months.

Renaming of Professional Development Center Receives Approval by Council

On June 15, City Council officially approved the Department's request to rename the Professional Development Center in the name of Medic II Joshua Weissman, who died in the line of duty on February 9, 2012. The formal recognition of the name change allows the Department to use the new name officially. A plaque, dedicating the Center in Weissman's name will be installed outside the front entrance and a formal dedication ceremony will be scheduled after City Council returns from their summer recess. 🚓

Community Engagement



AFD Admin Staff, Firefighters and Health Department Staff join together at the Annie B. Rose Complex to do home safety checks and medical assessments for the residents.

alarms, did a health assessment and took medical history and medication information and placed it on a File for Life form that was left with each resident.

At the Claridge House staff spoke with a number of residents about home fire safety and fall safety. In addition, the attendees were taught about preparing an emergency kit for weather related emergencies. The staff also handed out a number of educational materials on the subjects taught.

The staff devoted 4 hours to educating Alexandria's oldest population, making their lives safer through education and interaction. 🚒

Spring for Alexandria

On May 3 the Department safety survey, checked smoke spread out on different ends of the City to assist citizens in Spring for Alexandria. Spring for Alexandria is an annual event that City workers participate in. Projects range from making repairs to properties in need; cleaning up areas; to providing important information to the community.

This year the Department reached out to two elderly high-rise communities. At the Annie B. Rose House, teams of firefighters, medics and administrative staff spread out through the facility visiting residents.

At each visit they did a home fire safety survey, checked smoke



Community Services and Emergency Management staff meet with residents of the Claridge House to discuss home fire safety and emergency preparedness.

New Learning Management System Gives Greater Reach to Training Staff

In April the Professional Development Center (PDC) contracted with a Learning Management Systems (LMS) from Target Solutions. The new LMS will allow PDC staff to upload training content that Department staff can view from any computer with an Internet connection. Company Drills, shift drill materials, and other educational materials can be reviewed, tested and credited through the LMS. This enables the PDC to have a new vehicle for meeting the training needs of our field personnel without dealing with the logistics of moving companies out of their assigned territories. It provides opportunities for more training to be done in each fire station while keeping apparatus in the areas they are designated to protect.

Shift Drills Focus on the Basics

The new Field Training Officers have been busy facilitating a number of monthly shift drills. In April the PDC staff focused on standpipe operations. Each company rotated through and practiced using the new Sho Flo pressure / flow regulator with the high-rise packs. Engine operators also practiced supplying a standpipe with the Storz adapter and 4 inch supply line.



Sho Flo pressure / flow regulator

In May and June firefighters practiced rescue drags and carries as well as "Mayday" Drills.

City Manager Participates in Live Fire Training Exercise




Pictured l to r: Fire Chief Adam Thiel, Nelsie Smith, Budget Director, Alex Braden, Budget Analyst, and City Manager Rashad Young prior to participating in live burn exercises at the Department's Burn Building.

On April 11 City Manager Rashad M. Young joined Fire Chief Adam Thiel in live burn exercises at the Department's burn building. Accompanying Mr. Young were Nelsie Smith, Budget Director and Alex Braden, Budget Analyst for the

Fire Department. All three were given safety briefings and pre-drill vital assessments. Once they donned their Personal Protective Equipment and Self Contained Breathing Apparatus they entered the Fire Department's Burn Building where several live fires were burning. Chief Thiel accompanied them where they experienced the conditions firefighters deal with in a working fire incident. They also got to use some of the firefighting equipment, including a Thermal Imager in order to better understand the job of a firefighter.

All three did very well for their first time in a burning structure and they all walked away with an experience that few outside the Fire Department experience every day.

Operational Supervisor Training

In May all operational supervisors attended training at the PDC. Topics focused on trends and preventive measures noted by the Accident Review Board and use of tactics to aid in the ventilation of structures during firefighting operations. 

Fire, From Page 3

T203: "Tower 203 copy. Switching to 2 Delta."

Dispatcher: Affirmative Tower 203."

Technical Rescue Vehicle (Box Truck) arrives.



Alexandria Fire Department's new Technical Rescue Box Truck.

In March the Department received a new specially designed box truck for use as a technical rescue vehicle. The vehicle was funded through a 2012 National Capital Region (NCR) Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) Grant. The vehicle is one of five purchased for the Washington DC area. They are designed to be deployed with equipment and personnel to fill the gap between an initial major event and the arrival of a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Urban Search and Rescue Team (USAR). The vehicles are designed to function in this intermediate capacity for at least 48 hours.

The vehicles were delivered to the City of Alexandria, Fairfax, Montgomery and Prince Georges counties and the District of Columbia.

New Apparatus Celebration Held

On the evening of June 11 the Department, members of Council, the City Manager, and the public gathered at Station 209 to celebrate the arrival of nine new engines in addition to the new

ladder truck which went in service in February.

The ceremony was held to thank members of Council and the City Manager's Of-

fice for their support in acquiring these vehicles which will up-



Several of Alexandria's new fire engines on display at Fire Station 209.

grade and standardize the fire department fleet. The event capped years of work between numerous departments, fire department staff and the City Council. The Fleet Replacement plan became a reality in 2012 with the ordering of the first new ladder truck and sever-

al fire engines. Additional engines, medic units and staff duty vehicles were ordered in the following months.

The Department's fleet has been plagued with age related maintenance issues with the existing fleet. This was recognized by City Council and the City Manager and a plan was developed and implemented to address this issue.

As a result, the Alexandria community will be given a higher level of fire protection as the new vehicles are phased into service over the summer.

The Department's Chaplain, Nathan Krause, summed it up nicely when he said "Grant to

these new apparatus and those that will use them, the grace of your presence. Protect every man and woman that rides on these rigs. Stand watch with us over the citizens of this great city."

Promotions

In June the following staff were promoted:

Byron Andrews—promoted to Battalion Chief. Assigned to Battalion 212-B.

Benjamin Haight—promoted to Lieutenant. Assigned to Swing Lieutenant, Station 209-C. 🚒

Rescue, From Page 1.

trained teams to practice technical rescue skills and gain experience under realistic conditions. There are three main objectives to the event. First, the event is an opportunity to gain knowledge through experience; not guided instruction. Second, the Challenge provides a team building opportunity where ingenuity, coordination, and communication are essential to the effectiveness of each team in achieving success. Finally, the Challenge provides an opportunity for networking. With such a variety of teams present together, the Challenge is an excellent time for interaction and discussion of tactics, strategies, challenges and unique solutions which can benefit many members.

Safety is always the first priority with each scenario and there were plenty of facilitators providing over site to ensure each location was as safe as possible without diminishing the realism of each scenario. Nine challenges faced the teams over a four day period. The teams could complete each scenario in any

way they chose within the allotted time.

Challenge 1 – Civil Disturbance.

Teams were given tool familiarization training on site and then tasked with utilizing that training to extricate and remove simulated persons from man-made civil disturbance devices.

Challenge 2 – Tower Crane Rescue.

Teams were tasked with the rescue of an injured crane operator on a tower crane. Teams could only use 6 members on the crane at any one time.

Challenge 3 – Rope Rescue.

Teams were tasked with rescuing a victim using appropriate rope systems around encountered obstacles within the allocated time.



Teams complete final shoring exercises prior to lifting the concrete pipe at the bottom of the trench where a "victim" is trapped during the Trench Rescue exercise.

Challenge 4 – Trench Rescue.

Teams were to safely enter a deep trench using the appropriate shoring equipment, lift an object off a victim and remove the victim.

Challenge 5 – Heavy Rescue.

Teams utilized their own equip-



Team members exit one of the tunnels used for the obstacle course challenge.

ment to perform a heavy lift of an object and remove a victim.

Challenge 6 – Breaching and Breaking.

Teams were tasked with breaching and breaking through a series of obstacles so that all team members could fit through the opening and exit the area within the allotted time.

Challenge 7 – Confined Space Rescue.

The teams entered a series of underground tunnels and were tasked with searching and removing two victims.

SEE RESCUE, PAGE 9, COL. 2.

Health, From Page 2.

HSU/ Fire Department will look to provide everyone with the ability to complete an Emergency Contact Form. Taking a cue from the Local 2141, the fire department would like to offer this to everyone, so that each of you may be able to document any wishes that you may have in the event of something tragic. The HSU has already made the necessary infrastructure space to accept this information.

This past March, the fire department received an outside audit report card regarding our compliance related to the NFPA 1500 Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Programs. Much of the information within the report was expected. We did well in some areas and in some areas we did not. Working toward full compliance will most definitely be a medium to long range goal. With regards to this audit, one of the first issues the HSU will complete is guiding information and documents related to Ergonomics and a Hearing Conservation Plan.

Your Traumatic Exposure Recovery Program (TERP) will be expanded and continued training will be planned. Friends, I assure you that nobody other than us will ever fully understand the traumatic related behavioral challenges that we endure each and every day. If there ever was

a cause in the fire service to unite this is one of them.

In a recent email, I wrote this; there is an old axiom in philosophy that says...*agere sequitur esse*. Translated it means "action follows being." What it all boils down to is "actions speak louder than words." I sincerely hope that my **actions** and the actions of your Shift Safety Officers speak louder than words.

Even with all of the good work yet to be completed, I travel through my land of hope and dreams more optimistic than ever. The train that I travel on through the land of hope and dreams carries saints and sinners, losers and winners, lost souls and the brokenhearted, thieves and sweet souls departed, fools and kings. My health and safety train carries everyone; you don't need a ticket; you can just get on-board.

Stay Safe! 🚒

Rescue, From Page 8.

Challenge 8 – Obstacle Course. Team members were tasked with negotiating an obstacle course with limited tools and equipment, completing a series of tasks within a specified time period.

Challenge 9 – Tunnel Rescue. Teams were tasked with breaching an opening then trans versing a series of tunnels



Teams work in a heavy rain storm coordinating movement of items during the second part of the obstacle course exercise.

filled with debris in order to locate and remove one or more victims within the specified time period.

The four day event provided new and current team members with plenty of challenges that will help them to address many real life situations they may encounter in the future as they serve on the Department's Technical Rescue Team. 🚒



A team member exits the underground tunnels after finding a "victim".

Awards and Recognition

Virginia Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service



On June 1 members of the Department gathered in Richmond, Virginia to pay tribute to 10 Fire and EMS Service personnel who lost their lives in the line of duty in 2012 at the 16th Annual Virginia Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service. Among those honored was Alexandria Medic Joshua Weissman who died in the line of duty on February 9, 2012.

The service was held at the Richmond International Raceway Complex's Main Exhibition Hall. In addition to paying tribute to the ten recent honorees, the service also honored the memory of all that have given their lives in the line of duty in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Those who were paid tribute to this year were:

Joshua Weissman, Alexandria Fire Department—LODD 2/9/2012—died from injuries incurred while responding to a vehicle fire on Interstate 395.

Zachary Whitacre, Gore Volunteer Fire Department—LODD 2/13/2012—died from injuries sustained while responding to a fire.

Jonathan Myers, Norfolk Fire-Rescue—LODD 3/19/2012—died while serving at Fire Station 13.

John Echternach, Boones Mill Volunteer Fire Department—LODD 6/29/2012—died from injuries while assisting a motorist during the Derecho windstorm.

David Chew, Bloxom Volunteer Fire Department—LODD 7/16/2012—died from injuries sustained while responding to an emergency call.

M.L. "Pug" Wells, Elliston Volunteer Fire Department—LODD 3/7/2012—died while serving the Elliston Volunteer Fire Department.

Mark Baban, Fairfax County Fire Department—LODD 1/30/2012—died while serving at Fire Station 1.

Clyde Berry, Hopewell Fire Department—Died 12/8/2010.

Eldridge Canaday, James City County Fire Department—Died 11/27/2011.

Joshua Culler, Disputanta Volunteer Fire Department—Died 5/11/2012.

Public Safety Valor Awards



On June 13 the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce held the 27th Annual Public Safety Valor Awards at the Alexandria Crowne Plaza Hotel. Twenty-one public safety personnel from the Fire and Police Departments and the Sheriff's Office were honored. Eight members of the Fire Department were among the twenty-one awardees.

All of the Fire Department award-

ees were recognized for their efforts on the night of February 8, 2012 when Alexandria Fire and EMS units responded for a vehicle fire with a reported person trapped on Interstate 395. Medic II Joshua Weissman was the first to arrive and exited his medic unit and attempted to cross the regular travel lanes into the High Occupancy Lanes to look for the trapped driver in a car on fire. Weissman fell between the two bridge spans, falling 30 feet to the creek bed below. A major rescue effort was set in motion; searching for, treating and finally extricating him from the creek bed during a rain storm and rising creek waters. The efforts of Weissman's rescues allowed him to survive the incident and pass away the following day surrounded by family. Friends and co-workers.

For their courageous efforts the following members were recognized by the Chamber:

Lieutenant David Bogozzi—Silver Medal

EMS Supervisor Kelsea Bonkowski—Silver Medal

Firefighter Kenneth Salfelder—Silver Medal

Firefighter Chizoba Okoli—Silver Medal

Firefighter Stuart Smothers—Silver Medal

Medic II Charlie Curia—Silver Medal

Medic II Robert Honaker—Silver Medal

And

Medic II Joshua Weissman—Gold Medal (honored posthumously) 🚒

Spring 2013 Run Statistics (April through June)

	Unit	EMS	SUP	TOTAL	Current Year to Date	Previous Year
Station 201	E201	140	196	336	646	1336
Station 202	M202	430	110	540	1048	2177
	U202	4	2	6	8	32
Total		434	112	546	1056	2209
Station 203	E203	177	126	303	634	1255
	T203	33	183	216	451	478
Total		210	309	519	1085	1733
Station 204	E204	151	184	335	649	1422
	T204	31	331	362	672	1393
Total		182	515	697	1321	2815
Station 205	E205	180	327	507	984	1966
	M205	503	140	643	1291	2737
Total		683	467	1150	2275	4703
Station 206	E206	280	301	581	1173	2423
	M206	546	154	700	1386	2870
	R206	30	40	70	178	820
Total		856	495	1351	2737	6113
Station 207	E207	228	240	468	933	1950
	M207	466	96	562	1132	2386
Total		694	336	1030	2065	4336
Station 208	E208	378	337	715	1375	2870
	M208	528	144	672	1329	2818
	T208	74	310	384	738	1656
Total		980	791	1771	3442	7344
Station 209	E209	180	180	360	682	1349
	H209	0	12	12	33	72
	S209	0	3	3	7	191
Total		180	195	375	722	1612
Peak Time Medics	M213	1	0	1	5	48
	M214	155	38	193	384	851
Total		156	38	194	389	899
Station Totals		4515	3454	7969	15738	33100

Alexandria Fire Department

Remember, the opportunity for Safety Leadership stands before each of us, every day. Stay safe!

ALEXANDRIA FIRE DEPARTMENT
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POSTAGE

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